THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) As per the information furnished by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), no restrictions have been laid on banks/financial institutions for granting housing finance to NRIs. However, only institutions which are Authorised Dealers in Foreign Exchange are permitted to grant housing loans to NRIs.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) RBI has reported that banks are free to frame their own policies and terms and conditions for grant of housing loans for the resident and non-resident Indians. RBI has not prescribed any guidelines in this regard.

(e) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Opening of New ATMs in Banks

1664. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether RBI has received a large number of requests from banks for opening of new ATMs in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details of proposals pending so far; and

(c) what is the criterion for giving permission for ATMs to various banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Under the extant Branch Licensing Policy, banks are free to set up ATMs in the premises of existing branches and extension counters. Banks can also install ATMs on stand alone basis at other locations without prior approval of RBI. However, after installation, banks need to obtain a licence on post facto basis from RBI.

Funds for Refinery Project of Essar Group

1665. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ICICI had approached the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas with the request of OIDB funds amounting to Rs. 800 crore for Essar Group for its refinery project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ICICI had ever made such request earlier in favour of any private enterprise;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, why beginning has been made in this particular case and what is Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a), (b) and (e) Yes, Sir. ICICI has reported that on a specific request from ESSAR Oil Ltd, ICICI has requested Oil Industries Development Board (OIDB) in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to participate in the debt funding of the refinery project. Apart from this, ICICI as lead institution has also written to other banks for tying up of debt financing of the refinery project. Government has no direct role in the matter of reference of any specific request for OIDB fund by any company through any financial institution.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. ICICI has not made any earlier request in favour of any private enterprise for OIDB funds.

Alcoholic Beverages Imported by M/s Seagram

1666. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:
SHRI GOPAL SINGH G. SOLANKI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 246 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th July, 2000 and State:

(a) whether Government have since completed the investigations in regard to the valuation of the Alcoholic Beverages imported by M/s Seagram, and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken/proposed 'to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.